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Ex-spy blasts covert actions

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The United States is conducting covert Central Intelligence Agency actions throughout the world, a former CIA agent told students at the University of Texas at San Antonio Monday as he blasted Reagan Administration policies.

John Stockwell, who quit after 13 years of service to the CIA, served as the agency's station chief in Africa and as commander of the Angola Task Force.

He also was officer-in-charge of the Tay Ninh Province, Vietnam, and participated at the highest level of military planning, the National Security Council.

"Our national security is ill," Stockwell charged.

"There are thousands of covert actions taking place right under our noses," he said.

He is the highest-ranking official to openly criticize the agency, but never stated why he left the CIA.

Stockwell defined a covert action as an attempt to discomfort a government; the United States does not like by making the people so miserable that the economic and social fabric of the country tears apart.

"In the interests of national security we are methodically destabilizing an already troubled world, one that holds 52,000 atomic weapons and is building more every day," Stockwell said.

Stockwell said a covert action is taking place in Nicaragua today.

"The CIA is in Nicaragua, and is destroying by raiding farms so that farmers can't get produce to the market, blowing up schools, ambushing trucks on the road — and hospitals are treating wounded instead of the sick," he said.

Stockwell said that there are instances where agency men have gone into homes and murdered and mutilated family members while the children watched.

Stockwell said this is raw terrorism, but failed to elaborate if he personally took part in such activities.



JOHN STOCKWELL
... 'national security ill' ...

"We don't do it to Russia, France, Germany or Britain because they can do it back," Stockwell stated.

He said the attack on Nicaragua started in 1980 under President Jimmy Carter.

"He made the Sandinistas look evil, then Reagan came in and made them look worse," Stockwell said.

He charged that virtually everything Reagan has said about the Sandinistas is untrue.

"He said Nicaragua is forming a war machine. The truth is the armed forces of Nicaragua consist of only 40,000 soldiers. They have no vital air force and no bomber or fighter planes," Stockwell said.

"I can only surmise that our president has a defective mind," he said.

The CIA has taught torture techniques to Latin American police for 22 years under the Public Safety Program, Stockwell claimed.

"They picked up beggars in the streets and used them for guinea pigs. When they collapsed, a doctor would come in and shoot them with vitamin B to revive them. When they died they were mutilated and thrown into the street," he reported.

Stockwell said members of the CIA are red-blooded Americans who believe that because their president authorized their actions, Congress has OK'd them and the CIA has given them their orders, they are in the right.

Stockwell was sponsored by the UTSA Special Speakers Program.